

# STEP Academy Trust

## DISABILITY ACCESS STATEMENT

Three Year Plan

Publication Date: September 2023

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### Introduction

Heathfield Academy is committed to a fair and equal treatment of all individuals regardless of disability. Heathfield Academy will welcome applications from people with disabilities to join the Heathfield Academy community as pupils and employees.

### Aim

The aims of this statement are to ensure that:

- applications for admission from all potential pupils are considered in line with the published admission arrangements;
- applications for employment are considered and assessed on the basis of the applicants' aptitudes, abilities and qualifications;
- disabled employees and pupils have access to the appropriate support and adaptations to enable them to be fully included in the life of the Heathfield Academy;
- the views of individual pupils or employees are taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed;
- all pupils are fully integrated into the Heathfield Academy and individual needs are assessed and supported as far as is practicable within a mainstream educational establishment;
- employees working with disabled people, either as colleagues or as pupils, have appropriate information, support and training;
- Heathfield Academy takes steps to enable employees and pupils who become disabled during their time at Heathfield Academy to continue in their chosen career or course of study as far as is practicable;
- disabled members of the public can fully participate in public events held within the Heathfield Academy;
- so far as is reasonably practicable, Heathfield Academy premises are accessible and safe for disabled people;
- no disabled pupil or employee is treated less favourably as a result of their disability.

### Operation

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) will be responsible for ensuring that employees

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and parents/guardians are made aware of this policy and that the Disability Code of Practice set out below is followed. (Throughout this policy, the term “parents/guardians” means all those having parental responsibility for a child.)

The Head Teacher and the Academy Committee will have overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy statement is implemented.

### Disability Code of Practice

#### Environment

Any future building projects will be considered at the planning stage for accessibility and usability by people with disabilities.

Evacuation procedures and escape routes for pupils and employees with disabilities will be carefully planned and published.

#### Children

Applications will be considered in line with the published admission arrangements for all pupils. An applicant’s disability will not prevent him/her from being offered a place and integrated into Heathfield Academy unless:

- the content, structure and delivery of the curriculum are such that the pupil would be prevented from fulfilling a major part of it; or
- Heathfield Academy would be unable to provide suitably trained employees or facilities to allow the requirements of the National Curriculum to be met.

Heathfield Academy will aim to provide pupils with a disability with the appropriate support to enable them to be fully integrated. Heathfield Academy will not treat a pupil with a disability less favourably than any other pupil and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the full participation and integration of disabled pupils.

As far as resources allow, the needs of disabled pupils will be taken into account in the design, structure and flexibility of teaching methods and delivery. Where a curriculum area is organised in such a way that a disabled pupil cannot fully participate, alternative provision will be made.

Pupils with a disability or who become disabled whilst studying at Heathfield Academy will be given appropriate support from employees to enable them to have equal access to the curriculum. Individual needs will be considered and addressed by all curriculum areas in collaboration with the SENDCo and an Individual Education Plan drawn up on an annual basis.

Heathfield Academy recognises that special arrangements may be required to enable pupils with disabilities, including specific learning difficulties, to exhibit their capabilities and knowledge. Special arrangements will be made to enable such pupils to perform to the best of their ability by meeting

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their individual needs. Heathfield Academy will liaise with the relevant Examination Boards in such instances. Pupils and parents/guardians will be made fully aware of the process for making special arrangements for assessment and examinations by the SENDCo.

### Employees

Wherever practicable, Heathfield Academy will:

- consider and seek to employ disabled people in jobs suited to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications in line with the Equality Act (2010) and Disability Discrimination Act (2005)
- ensure that employees with disabilities are considered for promotion according to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications.
- ensure that disabled employees are not disadvantaged when the renewal of fixed-term contracts is being considered.

Employees, who become disabled during their employment by Heathfield Academy, so far as is practicable, will continue to remain employed by Heathfield Academy subject to review by the Headteacher and the Academy Committee. This review will assess their ability to carry out the duties of their post. Help from related professional organisations may also be sought when considering not only the possible effects of the disability but also other consequential disadvantages, such as loss of status or financial loss.

Heathfield Academy will endeavour to make any reasonable adjustments to enable the employee to continue in post. However, options might include:

- continuing in the same post
- a gradual return to work
- a reduction in hours
- redeployment
- premature retirement on grounds of incapacity
- termination of employment

In cases where a disability is a degenerative, progressive condition that develops over time, careful consideration should be given to the selection of the most appropriate option(s).

Heathfield Academy will make reasonable changes to work practices and, where possible, the workplace to enable disabled people to work successfully, including those employees who become disabled whilst employed.

Heathfield Academy will ensure that a programme of training is offered to employees to increase

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their awareness of pupils with disabilities and inform them of appropriate action to be taken when delivering the curriculum. Learning Support Assistants will support teaching staff as required to help ensure that disabled pupils have equal access to the curriculum.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The Academy Committee and Headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of Heathfield Academy's Disability Access Statement at specified intervals.

## Access Statement

- All children will be able to easily access all classrooms, toilets and play areas.
- A lift is available for those who may require it.
- A disabled toilet is also available for those who may require it.
- There will be easy access to the school playground, via two main gates.

### Arrangement for 2023/2024

- The views of individual pupils, parents, employees, governors and trustees will be taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- The views of the Health and Safety Officer will be taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- We will review our pupil intake to assess any needs that may arise.

### Arrangement for 2024/2025

- The views of individual pupils, parents, employees, governors and trustees will be taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- The views of the Health and Safety Officer will be taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- We will review our pupil intake to assess any needs that may arise.

### Arrangement for 2025/2026

- The views of individual pupils, parents, employees, governors and trustees will be taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- The views of the Health and Safety Officer will be taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- We will review our pupil intake to assess any needs that may arise.

Training for teachers on differentiating the curriculum	Undertake an audit of staff training requirements	All teachers are able to more fully meet the requirements of disabled pupils' needs with regards to accessing the curriculum. Meeting time is devoted to sharing of good practice/differentiated resources.	Ongoing	Increase in access to the Curriculum. Needs of all pupils are met
Training for teachers on differentiating the curriculum	Review the specific needs for pupils living with a disability, in terms of basic daily living skills, relationships and future aspirations.	Teachers are aware of the relevant issues and can ensure that this group has equality of access to life-preparation learning. The use of other professional partners has been made available.	Ongoing	Needs of all pupils are met. Good progress made by all learners
All out-of-Heathfield activities are planned to ensure the participation of the whole range of pupils	Review all out-of-Heathfield Academy provision to ensure compliance with legislation	All out-of-Heathfield activities will be conducted in an inclusive environment with providers that comply with all current and future legislative requirements	Ongoing	Increase in access to all Heathfield Academy activities for all disabled pupils
Classrooms are optimally organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils	Review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and equipment to support the learning process.	Lessons start on time without the need to make adjustments to accommodate the needs of individual pupils. All pupils are included in the learning	Ongoing	Increase in access to the Curriculum Needs of all pupils are met

## Improving the Delivery of Written Information

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	ACHIEVEMENT
Availability of written material in alternative formats	Heathfield Academy will make itself aware of the services available for converting written information into alternative formats as required	Heathfield Academy will be able to provide written information in different formats when required for individual purposes as required	Ongoing	Delivery of information to pupils improved
Make available Heathfield Academy prospectus and other information for parents and carers on website and in paper format	Review all Heathfield Academy publications and promote the availability in different formats	All Heathfield Academy information available for all	Ongoing	Delivery of Heathfield Academy information to parents and the local community improved
Review documentation with a view of ensuring accessibility for pupils with visual impairment	Get advice on alternative formats and use of IT software to produce customised materials as required	All Heathfield Academy information available for all as required	Ongoing	Delivery of Heathfield Academy information to pupils & parents with visual difficulties improved.
Ensure that parents and carers receive information from Heathfield Academy in a format of their choice	Survey parents to gain information regarding their choice of format (paper or email communications)	Parents and carers will receive information in the medium of their choice	Ongoing	Heathfield Academy is more effective in meeting the communication choices of parents and carers. Staff will be aware of preferred format for communications amongst

				parents/carers
Ensure that all Heathfield Academy communications use plain English	A member of SLT to check all communications to parents/carers before distribution	All communications will be easy to read and have clarity of purpose	Ongoing	Parents and carers will be clear as to purpose of communications